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UNCLAS WELLINGTON 000393

SIPDIS

SENSITIVE

STATE FOR IO/UNP AND EAP/ANZ

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [NZ](#) [UNGA](#) [UNSC](#)

SUBJECT: ICJ ELECTIONS DEMARCHE: NEW ZEALAND RESPONSE

REF: SECSTATE 80697

1. (SBU) Post provided reftel dipnote and background information on Judge Buergenthal's International Court of Justice (ICJ) nomination to the UN & Commonwealth Division at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade (MFAT). On May 18, an officer in the Division told Pol-Econ Counselor that MFAT had already received the information through the New Zealand mission in New York. While MFAT staff had not yet put the candidacy to Ministers, the officer predicted it likely that New Zealand officials would want to support Judge Buergenthal's nomination since they believe it is important that the United States maintains a presence on the Court.

2. (SBU) The officer also said New Zealand hopes that the United States will support the candidacy of Sir Kenneth Keith, New Zealand's first ever nominee to the ICJ. Sir Kenneth has just returned from a lobbying trip to New York, and on June 3 will make a similar trip to Washington. While there, he will meet with IO A/S Holmes, members of the U.S. National Group in the Permanent Court of Arbitration, and possibly with Judge Buergenthal. A member of the New Zealand National Group of the Permanent Court of Arbitration, Sir Kenneth is a Judge on New Zealand's newly-established Supreme Court. He is also a Judge of Appeal in Samoa, the Cook Islands, and Nuie; as well as on the Supreme Court in Fiji.

Swindells